

babytalk

STRAIGHT TALK FOR NEW MOMS

baby steps

the truth about milestones, by mindy berry

birth to 4 months: your little travel buddy

There's nothing more exciting than making the holiday rounds with a new baby to show off—for you, anyway. Your little one may have a different idea. Help him maintain an even keel with these stay-cheery tips:

1 be greedy. Well-meaning relatives will be happy to meet the new addition and, of course, will want to hold him. To avoid hurt feelings, say something like "I'm going to hang on to him for now. The truth is he gets overwhelmed by crowds, so we're going to take it slow," suggests Claire Lerner, the director of parenting information and resources at Zero to

Three, a national child-development organization in Washington, D.C.

2 take a time-out. You may be enjoying chatting up cousin Carla over a leisurely dinner, but if your baby starts working his way to a meltdown, retreat from the crowd for a short time. Take him into a dark, quiet room and softly reassure him. You'll be surprised how quickly he can relax and recharge for the party's second half.

3 go with his flow. Sure, you may always put him down for his morning nap at 9:15 and nurse him every two hours on the dot. But when you're traveling, those home routines just may not work. He may sleep a little more (or, God forbid, a little

counting sheep

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less), or he may feel like nursing more than usual just for the comfort of it. Or he may stick to his schedule like glue...who knows? The point: "Do whatever works in the moment," says Lerner. You'll be less stressed—and your baby will be, too.

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